

INTERPRETING THE OLD TESTAMENT FOR THE PURPOSE
OF DERIVING EVIDENCE OF A VISITATION
BY EXTRATERRESTRIAL LIFE

by

Michael E. Allen

Hunter Faure
Advisor

SEN:GEM
1972
A449

GEOLOGY LIBRARY
Geology Department
Senior Thesis
May 1972

PREFACE

Presently we are expanding our knowledge of the universe, and realize intelligent life may exist elsewhere. Though we have penetrated our solar system with spacecraft, and explored other galaxies using radio telescopes, it is a common belief our technology is still in its infancy. With this in mind some people question whether life on other planets may be more technologically advanced, and if such life can or has made direct contact with humans. If contact was made in the earliest periods of human history any physical record might be obliterated or deformed to where it is not recognizable, by corrosion or weathering. Only cryptic descriptions by impressionable people would possibly find immortality in literature.

There are passages in the Old Testament that describe visitations of divine beings from Heaven. Interpretations vary with individual viewpoints. Many interpretations are derived assuming the passages deal only with human spiritual events. However, it may be valuable to evaluate such literature for evidence of contact with extraterrestrial life. The author will attempt to do this with a few select passages for the purpose of:

- 1) demonstrating evidence that may be derived
- 2) relating problems encountered during evaluation
- 3) stimulating interest to evaluate other literature in this fashion, so its possibilities can be made clear.

I

The appearances of the visitors from Heaven as described in the Old Testament do not vary considerably. Fire and clouds are commonly associated with phenomena resembling those produced by modern vehicles of chemical propulsion. For example, in Exodus 13:21 the Lord is said to have led the Israelites through the desert in the form of a pillar of a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. The pillar of fire and of a cloud reappears throughout the Old Testament in other circumstances. In Numbers 12:5 ,

And the Lord came down in the pillar
of the cloud, and stood in the door of
the tabernacle, and called Aaron and Miriam:
and they both came forth.

Notice that the pillar and the cloud seem to be described as two discrete objects. As it is written, a possible interpretation might be simply that a being, referred to as the Lord, descended in an object resembling a pillar; and the pillar, as it was descending, produced a cloud of vapor or smoke. This interpretation does not directly state it is a visitation by a creature from another planet, and one does not have to assume this was so to derive such a statement. By its nature though, it does typify what we would imagine an alien visitation might appear as.

A problem arises if the passage is considered as describing a "pillar of a cloud", or rather a cloud in the form of a pillar. If this was the case, a different interpretation would be necessary. Obviously the problem is semantic in origin. Deuteronomy 31:15 emphasizes this difficulty.

And the Lord appeared in the tabernacle in a pillar of a cloud: and the pillar of the cloud stood over the door of the tabernacle.

"Pillar of a cloud" may be interpreted differently than "pillar of the cloud".

Many passages describing the visitors are so vague that it would be impossible to make a significant interpretation. As in Numbers 11:25 ,

And the Lord came down in a cloud and spake unto him.....

Nothing more is known than a being, again called the Lord, descended in a cloud. It is possible to continue along the same line of thought used in the interpretation of Numbers 12:5 to say that at times the pillar shaped object obscured itself in a cloud of smoke, however this would be building upon two assumptions:

- 1) the pillar and the cloud are two distinct objects, calling for a resolution of the semantic problem.
- 2) the interpretation of Numbers 12:5 is near to what actually happened.

Yet, to disregard this passage would be foolish. Passages like Numbers 11:25, and others more detailed such as Deuteronomy 31:15, should be carefully noted. A study based on the same method of interpretation of other ancient literature, having similar descriptions, could be compared to a study of the Old Testament. The results of such a comparison might produce some degree of evidence that life from another planet did visit our planet during the second millennium.

The vehicles used by the visitors from the heavens must have been quite large and impressive, as indicated in II Samuel 22:7-16. The ground trembled and was blackened to glowing cinders as the Lord descended upon a "cherub", discharging fire and smoke. Similar passages are Exodus 19:16-20. A few of the more interesting parts of this section contribute some new information:

19:16 And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet exceeding loud; so that all the people that was in the camp trembled.

19:18 And the mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly.

19:19 And when the voice of the trumpet sounded long, and waxed louder and louder, Moses spake, and God answered him by a voice.

These passages bring to mind the spectacle of a Saturn V as it slowly raises off its launching pad, however, here we have the trumpet noise to account for. There is no other passage in the Old Testament that mentions this trumpet noise, and consequently it may be necessary to look at other ancient literature for similar occurrences, to draw an interpretation. Another peculiar aspect of this visit is how the smoke ascended vertically "as the smoke of a furnace". This may indicate a slow rate of descent, which would be required for a safe landing.

A few passages have no equivalent elsewhere .

Genesis 19:1-28 is one of the few sections of the Old Testament that refers the visitors as being "men", or at least looking like men. For example:

19:1 And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot sat in the gate of Sodom: and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them; and he bowed himself with his face toward the ground;

and later, again referring to the angels,

19:16 And while he lingered, the men laid hold upon his hand,.....

If these beings, described as the Lord and angels, were visitors from another planet; what a fantastic coincidence it would be if they looked like us. Another passage which stands by itself is Zechariah 5:2 .

And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying roll; the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits.

This is not unlike the descriptions of cigar shaped UFOs people claim to see today. Note also that this "flying roll" is similar in shape to the "pillar of the cloud mentioned earlier.

Of all the passages in the Old Testament, none are as detailed and show as much promise as chapters 1 and 10 in Ezekiel. The comparisons used to describe what must have been very strange looking objects, seem to be made by a person of relatively strong scientific nature for the period in which he lived. Due to the great length of the passages, a Xerox copy will follow on the next page.

THE BOOK OF THE PROPHET EZEKIEL

CHAPTER 1

The Vision Ezekiel had in Babylon.

NOW it came to pass in the thirtieth year, in the fourth month, in the fifth day of the month, as I was among the captives by the river of Chêbâr, that the heavens were opened, and I saw visions of God.

2 In the fifth day of the month, which was the fifth year of king Jê-hoi'a-chin's captivity.

3 The word of the LORD came expressly unto E-zê'ki-el the priest, the son of Bû'zi, in the land of the Châl-de'ans by the river Chêbâr; and the hand of the LORD was there upon him.

4 ¶ And I looked, and, behold, a whirlwind came out of the north, a great cloud, and a fire infolding itself, and a brightness was about it, and out of the midst thereof as the colour of amber, out of the midst of the fire.

5 Also out of the midst thereof came the likeness of four living creatures. And this was their appearance; they had the likeness of a man.

6 And every one had four faces, and every one had four wings.

7 And their feet were straight feet; and the sole of their feet was like the sole of a calf's foot; and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass.

8 And they had the hands of a man under their wings on their four sides; and they four had their faces and their wings.

9 Their wings were joined one to another; they turned not when they

went; they went every one straight forward.

10 As for the likeness of their faces, they four had the face of a man, and the face of a lion, on the right side: and they four had the face of an ox on the left side; they four also had the face of an eagle.

11 Thus were their faces: and their wings were stretched upward; two wings of every one were joined one to another, and two covered their bodies.

12 And they went every one straight forward: whither the spirit was to go, they went; and they turned not when they went.

13 As for the likeness of the living creatures, their appearance was like burning coals of fire, and like the appearance of lamps: it went up and down among the living creatures; and the fire was bright, and out of the fire went forth lightning.

14 And the living creatures ran and returned as the appearance of a flash of lightning.

15 ¶ Now as I beheld the living creatures, behold one wheel upon the earth by the living creatures, with his four faces.

16 The appearance of the wheels and their work was like unto the colour of a beryl: and they four had one likeness: and their appearance and their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel.

17 When they went, they went upon their four sides: and they turned not when they went.

18 As for their rings, they were so high that they were dreadful; and their rings were full of eyes round

about them four.

19 And when the living creatures went, the wheels went by them: and when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up.

20 Whithersoever the spirit was to go, they went, thither was their spirit to go; and the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

21 When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.

22 And the likeness of the firmament upon the heads of the living creature was as the colour of the terrible crystal, stretched forth over their heads above.

23 And under the firmament were their wings straight, the one toward the other: every one had two, which covered on this side, and every one had two, which covered on that side, their bodies.

24 And when they went, I heard the noise of their wings, like the noise of great waters, as the voice of the Almighty, the voice of speech, as the noise of an host: when they stood, they let down their wings.

25 And there was a voice from the firmament that was over their heads, when they stood, and had let down their wings.

26 ¶ And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it.

27 And I saw as the colour of amber, as the appearance of fire round about within it, from the appearance of his loins even upward, and from the appearance of his loins even downward, I saw as it were the appearance of fire, and it had brightness round about.

28 As the appearance of the bow that is in the cloud in the day of rain, so was the appearance of the brightness round about. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake.

CHAPTER 10

The Vision of the Cherubim and the Wheels.

THEN I looked, and, behold, in the firmament that was above the head of the cherubims there appeared over them as it were a sapphire stone, as the appearance of the likeness of a throne.

2 And he spake unto the man clothed with linen, and said, Go in between the wheels, even under the cherub, and fill thine hand with coals of fire from between the cherubims, and scatter them over the city. And he went in in my sight.

3 Now the cherubims stood on the right side of the house, when the man went in; and the cloud filled the inner court.

4 Then the glory of the LORD went up from the cherub, and stood over the threshold of the house; and the house was filled with the cloud, and the court was full of the brightness of the LORD's glory.

5 And the sound of the cherubims' wings was heard even to the outer court, as the voice of the Almighty God when he speaketh.

6 And it came to pass, that when he had commanded the man clothed with linen, saying, Take fire from between the wheels, from between the cherubims; then he went in, and stood beside the wheels.

7 And one cherub stretched forth his hand from between the cherubims unto the fire that was between the cherubims, and took thereof, and put it into the hands of him that was clothed with linen: who took it, and went out.

8 ¶ And there appeared in the cherubims the form of a man's hand under their wings.

9 And when I looked, behold the four wheels by the cherubims, one wheel by one cherub, and another

wheel by another cherub: and the appearance of the wheels was as the colour of a beryl stone.

10 And as for their appearances, they four had one likeness, as if a wheel had been in the midst of a wheel.

11 When they went, they went upon their four sides; they turned not as they went, but to the place whither the head looked they followed it; they turned not as they went.

12 And their whole body, and their backs, and their hands, and their wings, and the wheels, were full of eyes round about, even the wheels that they four had.

13 As for the wheels, it was cried unto them in my hearing, O wheel.

14 And every one had four faces: the first face was the face of a cherub, and the second face was the face of a man, and the third the face of a lion, and the fourth the face of an eagle.

15 And the cherubims were lifted up. This is the living creature that I saw by the river of Chêbâr.

16 And when the cherubims went, the wheels went by them: and when the cherubims lifted up their wings to mount up from the earth, the same wheels also turned not from beside them.

17 When they stood, these stood; and when they were lifted up, these lifted up themselves also: for the spirit of the living creature was in them.

18 Then the glory of the LORD departed from off the threshold of the house, and stood over the cherubims.

19 And the cherubims lifted up their wings, and mounted up from the earth in my sight: when they went out, the wheels also were beside them, and every one stood at the door of the east gate of the LORD's house; and the glory of the God of Is'ra-el was over them above.

20 This is the living creature that I saw under the God of Is'ra-el by the river of Chêbâr; and I knew that they were the cherubims.

21 Every one had four faces apiece, and every one four wings; and the likeness of the hands of a man was under their wings.

22 And the likeness of their faces was the same faces which I saw by the river of Chêbâr, their appearances and themselves: they went every one straight forward.

Here indeed is a very strange description. It gives the impression that this man very definitely saw something out of the ordinary, and he did his very best to let us know what it looked like. There is a considerable amount of information to look at, so we shall review the major points.

- 1) Four "creatures" having the appearance of men arrived (1:5) producing an "infolding fire" and a "whirlwind" (1:4).
- 2) Each creature had four distinct sides, and on each side there was a "face" and at least one "wing" (1:8), (1:10), (10:14). The wings are raised during flight (10:19), and lowered to cover the body when resting (1:11). Under each wing is the form of a man's hand (1:8), (10:8). They are said to have feet (it does not say how many) like the sole of a calf's foot (1:7). The creatures also have a metallic shine, rather, they sparkled like "burnished brass" (1:7).
- 3) Each creature was accompanied by a "wheel" (1:16), (10:9) that moved in coordination with the creature's movements (1:19), (10:16).
- 4) A "terrible crystal" covered their heads (1:22) and near the top of the crystal was a throne (1:26) with the likeness of a man in it.
- 5) The area surrounding the creatures glowed like a rainbow (1:28).
- 6) The creatures moved in formation (1:12) very similar to the way one would move a rook in chess (1:17), (10:11).

The creatures bear a striking resemblance to a modern helicopter, and perhaps, if they are from another planet, the creatures may actually be machines used by the aliens to travel around on the surface of the earth. The hands under each wing may be mechanical arms, and the throne on top of each crystal may be a couch or chair from which the aliens directed the vehicle's movements. The feet like the sole of a calf's

may be engine exhausts or landing struts. Granted, most of the above is pure speculation, however the inescapable fact is that they do have mechanical characteristics.

Before going on to the next section of this discussion, it will be convenient to summarize what we have gained thus far by interpreting the Old Testament in this fashion.

First it is necessary to point out that the results are not conclusive, rather they only tend to substantiate the possibility that aliens did visit our planet. There is not a single passage, no matter how clear it may be to some people, that one can positively say this or that was the way it happened. This is ofcourse exception to those people who base their religious beliefs upon The Old Testament. Religion is a matter of faith, and faith cannot be analyzed or critisized.

Secondly, it is clear that no substantial evidence can be derived from a study of the Old Testament alone. Other literature, both ancient and modern dealing with the "visitors from Heaven", must be studied to compare their descriptions. If they match in some way, the coincidence alone would be some degree of evidence of a visitation.

As for what the visitors looked like, the descriptions indicate they took human form and arrived in mechanical-like objects. And where do they come from? Isaiah 13:5 answers this somewhat.

They come from a far country, from the
end of heaven, even the Lord and the weapons
of his indignation, to destroy the whole land.

II

A question could be raised as to whether evidence might be derived not from just looking at the descriptions of the visitors, but also at what they did while they were here. If, for instance, the visitors were said to be frequently picking up and hammering at rocks, it would indicate that they were making a geologic investigation. Unfortunately there are no such passages in the Old Testament, that clearly describe activities peculiar to explorers from another planet. Instead there is a confusing mixture of two different types. The first relates how the visitors participated in such primitive activities as animal sacrifice. A good example of this is Leviticus 9:24 .

And there came a fire out from before the Lord, and consumed upon the altar the burnt offering and the fat: which when all the people saw, they shouted, and fell on their faces.

In many instances the visitors demanded sacrifices, as in Numbers 28:2 .

Command the children of Israel and say unto them, My offering, and my bread, for my sacrifices made by fire, for a sweet savour unto me, shall ye observe to offer unto me in their due season.

Passages such as this tend to weaken any previously derived evidence, as these actions, at least to the author, do not seem logical for an alien visitor.

The second type of passage describing the visitors activities relate how they aided the Israelites not only in domestic affairs, but also in war. In Joshua 10:11 the Lord helps the Israelites defeat their enemy.

And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down to Bethhoron, that the Lord cast down great stones ~~from~~ heaven upon them unto Azekah, and they died: they were more which died with hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with swords.

Exodus 35:31-33 tells how the Lord introduces knowledge into ~~one~~ of the Israelites to build things which ~~were~~ strange to them.

35:31 And he hath filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship;

35:32 And to devise curious works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass,

35:33 And in the cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of wood, to make any manner of cunning work.

There are many other passages similar to the ones mentioned, and in general they indicate the visitors were very carefully guiding and watching over this group of people; ~~sorting out~~ a few for special tasks, and destroying, without mercy, others who were a potential danger to the Israelites.

It appears the visitors were not only directing the Israelites' movements from above, but also from within, by special people called prophets. Elijah was a prophet, and II Kings 2:11 describes him flying away in one of the visitor's "chariots of fire".

And it came to pass, as they still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven.

Elijah's intimate connection with the visitors is brought out in Malachi 4:5 .

Behold, I will send you Elijah
the prophet before the coming of the
great and dreadful day of the Lord.

The relatively detailed account of what the visitors did while they were here lends nothing to our knowledge of the purpose of their activities, nor does it improve upon or add to what we already know about them from the sources stated in the first section of this paper. This is due in part because the activities of the visitors do not seem typical of explorers from another planet. It must be remembered though, the passages of section one and two are not contradictions, but merely unconformities.

CONCLUSION

By interpreting parts of the Old Testament in this fashion, nothing has been proven, and it should be clear at least by now that nothing can be proven. This study has, however, brought out evidence which supports the possibility that creatures from another planet did make direct contact with humans during biblical times. And it was emphasized previously, to further substantiate the very weak evidence derived here, we must look at other literature for similar occurrences. In time either the possibility will become more evident, or further confusion will prove this method unproductive and useless.

If strong evidence can be derived, then perhaps we should reconsider not only our past, but also our future. Geologists who will explore the Moon and other planets should be warned of the possibility of finding artifacts left behind by the aliens as they explored this region of space. And if by luck they should, the reason for their existence will already be known.

Some other interesting passages not mentioned earlier
in this paper are:

Genesis	6:2 6:4 30:37-43	Joshua	3:15-17 10:13 17:15 17:16
Exodus	3:2 14:19 14:21-29 16:14-15 24:15-16 40:38	Judges	4:3 6:21 13:20
Leviticus	13:1-59 16:2	I Samuel	5:6-9
Numbers	9:15-16 14:14 16:32 16:42 21:6 26:10	I Kings	18:38
Deuteronomy	1:33 2:10-11 2:20-21 5:22-26	II Chronicles	7:2
		Job	38:1
		Isaiah	6:1-4 13:13 38:8
		Jeremiah	4:13
		Zechariah	2:1-5

Passages were taken from the King James version of
the Holy Bible, set forth in 1611 A.D. .